

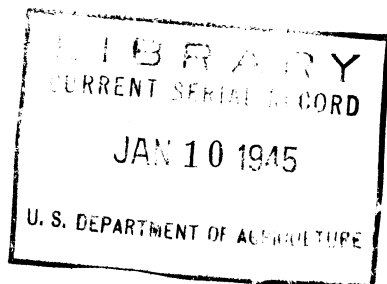
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Presses and Aprons

*for work
in
the home*



FARMERS' BULLETIN NO. 1963_____

_____U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DRESSES AND APRONS

for work in the home

by

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If you are a homemaker doing your own work, then, like the rest of the busy world of workers, you want clothing suited to your job. A dress that restricts when you reach or bend, that twists or gets in your way when you stoop or climb may be as fatiguing as a poorly planned kitchen. Yet there are homemakers who give less attention to the selection of their work garments than they do to choosing kettles, and pans, often buying a dress or apron merely because it has heart-shaped pockets or perky ruffles. Actually, the beauty of a dress depends not on decoration alone, but first and foremost on basic cut and design features which make it possible for the dress to follow the movements of the body gracefully and harmoniously.

Keeping in mind a homemaker's need for clothes that are comfortable and saving of time and energy, the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics has designed the dresses and aprons shown on the following pages. Commercial companies have reproduced these designs in patterns, thus making them available to home sewers.

Each of these designs meets the following tests as a functional garment:

- **Free action and coolness** for comfort.
- **Safety features** for work around the stove, for stooping, for getting up and down on chairs or ladders.
- **Time- and energy-saving features** that make a garment quick and easy to put on—quick and easy to iron. It must have pockets that are useful and are placed where they can be reached without fumbling.

And for the homemaker who sews, the functional dress must be simple to make.

- **Durability** both in material and workmanship.
- **Attractiveness** based on usefulness and comfort.

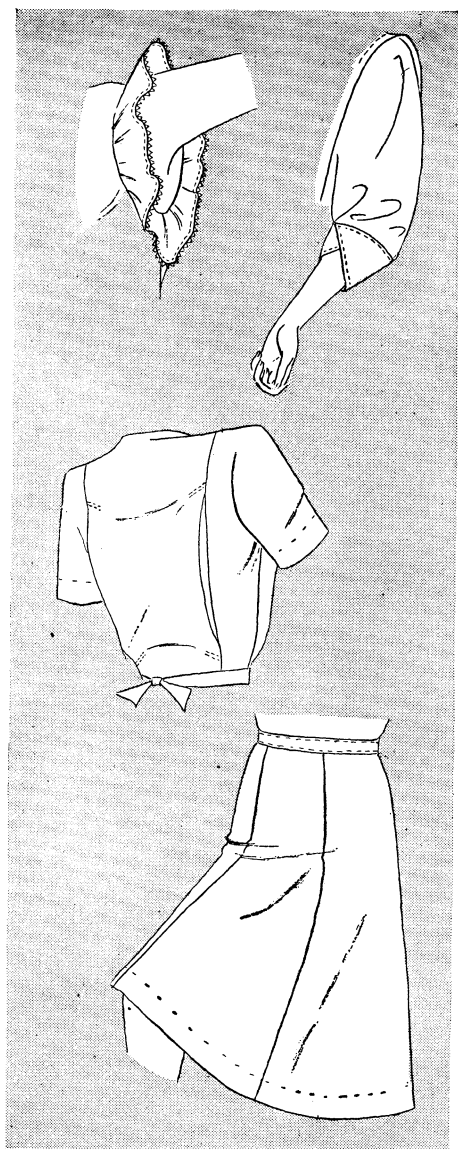
In more detail, here are pointers about skirts, blouse backs, and other parts of a functional garment that can help you when selecting a pattern or ready-to-wear for work around the home. Keep in mind that all parts of a functional dress must work together for the comfort of the wearer. The advantage of one good design feature can be lost if the rest of the dress is poorly planned or doesn't fit. A well-cut sleeve, for example, may be hampered by a back that's too tight, for sleeves and back must move together to give room for action.

Sleeves are most comfortable and safe if they're short—above the elbows—and moderately wide. For more freedom and cool comfort, use wings or ruffles instead of sleeves. On chilly mornings when you need extra warmth, wear a work jacket with three-quarter-length sleeves, tapered to fit the lower arm so sleeves won't catch on kitchenware. Later when the house has warmed up, you can shed the jacket and enjoy the comforts of short sleeves.

Then, instead of shoulder pads—since they're warm, slow drying, and a nuisance to launder—use light, washable stiffening.

Blouse backs designed for action may have pleats, gathers, or some other feature that provides width, but they're action backs only if fullness is placed where it can respond to arm and shoulder movements.

Skirts, moderately wide, but not full are safest for work around a home. A gored skirt may be cut wide enough at the bottom to allow for walking, running, climbing, stooping, and yet be fitted enough about the hips to stay in place. A full skirt like a dirndl may get stepped on when you're going up and down a ladder to wash windows or stooping to low shelves.



Neck lines made large enough so you can pull them over your head without strain or fuss save dressing time and wear and tear on the garment. They don't muss the hair, and they're cool.

Flat trimming, flat collars, or flared ruffles are best for neck lines because they can't crowd up against the throat. In general, ruffles or collars are more satisfactory both to iron and to wear if they end at the shoulder seams, leaving the neck line plain in the back.

Waist bands fitted easy rather than tight help make a dress cool and allow it to move freely when there is reaching to do. Set-in belts hold skirt and blouse fullness in its proper place and are safe because they're flat. Ties, set in the side or side-front seams, allow you to adjust the waistline at the back as you choose. But they need to be narrow and tie in a flat bow. A wide fluffy bow is likely to catch on things in the kitchen.

Pockets placed on the full parts of the garment but not on the rounded parts of the body are easier to use. The right size depends on the purpose they must serve. In general, a pocket must be large enough for your closed hand. Straight and slanting tops are equally handy if a pocket is at the side, where your hand can drop straight down into it. But if a pocket is close to the front, slant the opening toward the back.

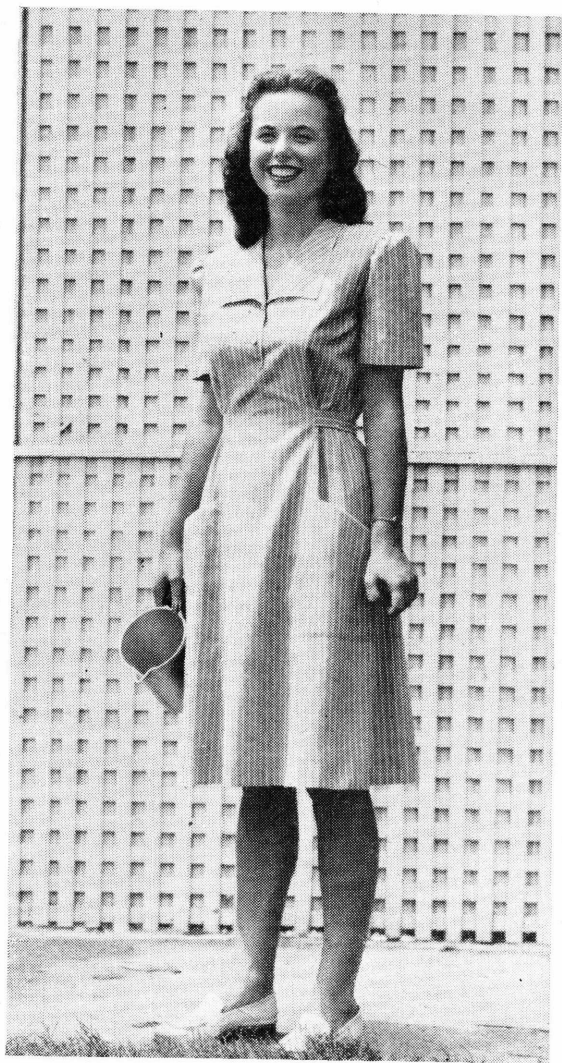
Dress openings must be long enough so you can get into the dress easily without straining the material or mussing your hair.

Fastenings may be as few as will serve to prevent gapping. Keep buttons within hand range so that it's not necessary to bend over or to pull the dress up to button it. Flat, medium-sized buttons with smooth edges are less likely to break or tear buttonholes and are easier for ironing. Be sure fastenings are colorfast, rustproof, and in other ways washable.

Materials best for housework are mediumweight cottons that can be worn without a slip. Fabrics with all-over patterns on colored rather than white backgrounds look fresh longer. Whenever possible, get dyes that are fast to washing, sun, and perspiration. Be sure materials are thoroughly preshrunk.

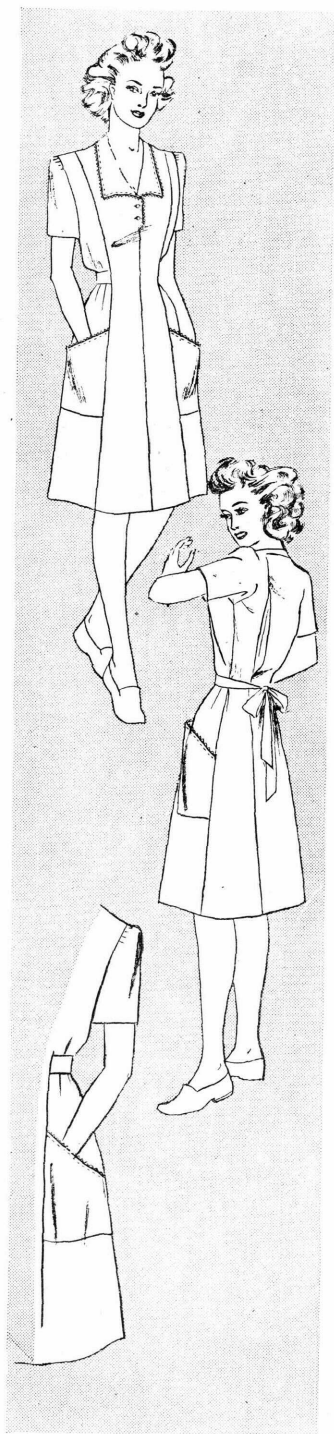
Trimming must be as sturdy as the material so it won't get ragged while the dress is still good. Trim will lie flat and be easier to iron if, like the fabric, it is preshrunk.

Workmanship must be neat and sturdy with reinforcements at parts of the dress that get strain—at pocket corners—at places where buttons are sewed on. Buttonholes to be durable must be cut with the grain of the goods and closely worked. Construction, besides being strong, should be flat with no thick lumpy corners that spoil the looks of a garment and make ironing slow.



Tailored Princess Dress

Trim and simply designed, this princess dress never hampers activity whether you are reaching for the topmost dish or stooping to pick up a mess of green beans. Pleats set in side-back seams function with the sleeves and give room where it's needed. The collar, at front only, is cut in one with the dress. A plain neck line at the back is cool and less bother when a wrap is worn.

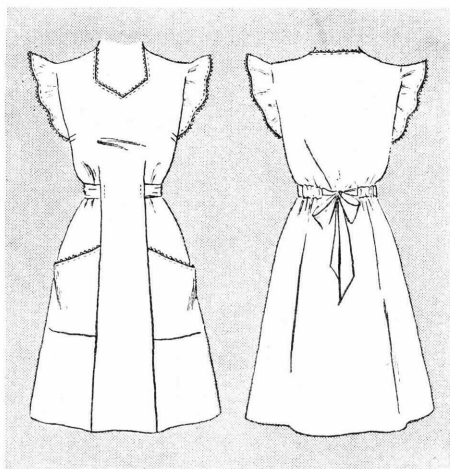


Pull-Over Dress with Ties

Simple to make, the pull-over is a straight, one-piece style with a flat, low neck and ruffles instead of sleeves.

A sash runs through "tunnels" sewed along the waistline at side back. When tied at center back, this sash gathers in the skirt fullness and holds it in place so as to prevent pouching after sitting.

Rickrack trims and strengthens the neck and ruffles. It will last as long as the dress.



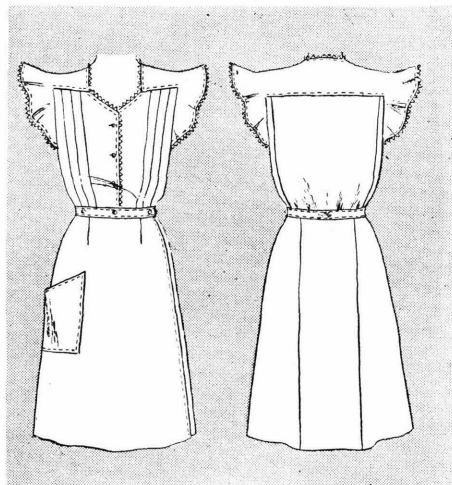
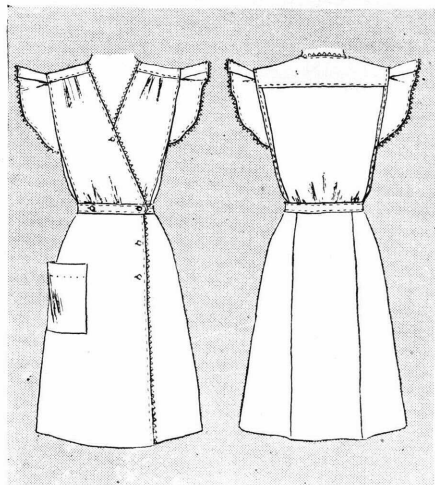
Surplice Dress

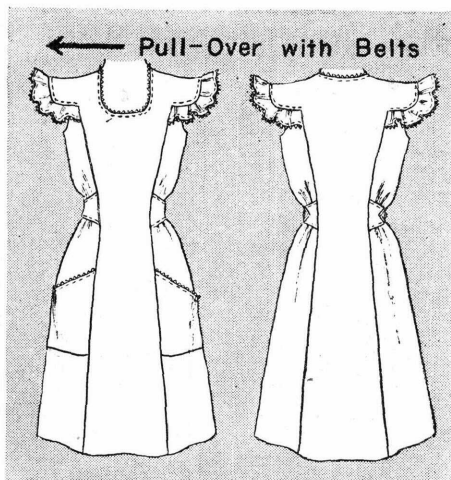
Quick and easy to get into, this coat-style surplice dress fastens at points on the dress natural for the hands to follow. Two buttons at the waist and two from the waist to the bend of the hips keep the skirt from swinging open too far. Plain, collarless neck line and wings instead of sleeves are cool for long hours in a hot kitchen.

Wrap-Around Dress

A time-saver in the morning, the wrap-around is slipped into like a coat. All buttons, within hand range on the waist and belt, are fastened quickly. The lapped skirt, darted in front and gored in back, needs no buttons. Easy-to-iron pleats below a yoke give the blouse roominess. And the large pocket is so placed that the hand falls into it naturally.







Pull-Over Dress with Belts

Easy to launder...the pull-over dress has few seams, narrow ruffles instead of sleeves, a flat, collarless neck. The short side belts unbutton, allowing the fullness to spread out for ironing.

For long, hot days in the kitchen, this dress is cool and comfortable. Nothing about it will cling and restrict as you work.



Tie-Around Dress

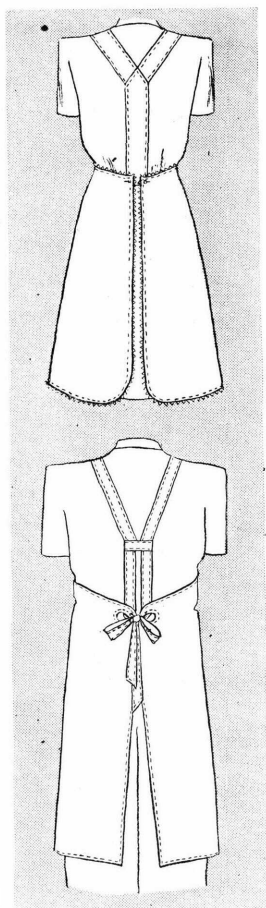
Designed for action, this dress has pleats in the back with plenty of "give" for reaching; a skirt roomy enough for stooping; ties to allow as much ease in adjusting the waist as you desire; and cool, flared sleeves.

Other features: Flared ruffles ending at the shoulders in place of a collar; large pockets; one button at the neck, three from waist to hip to keep the lapped skirt from blowing open.

U-Neck Dress

Easy to put on, even when days are hot and sticky, this dress has a long front opening so it may be pulled over the head or stepped into, as you choose. All buttons are within hand range, with one at the waist exactly in line with the ties to prevent an ugly gap. The dress has an action back, roomy sleeves, and patch pockets at hand level.





Skirt Apron

Designed for the woman who wants an apron skirt to cover her and just enough bib to catch the splatters of dishwater, this apron is made in one piece cut crosswise of the goods. The "can't slip" shoulder straps join into a single strip at the back—easy to fasten.

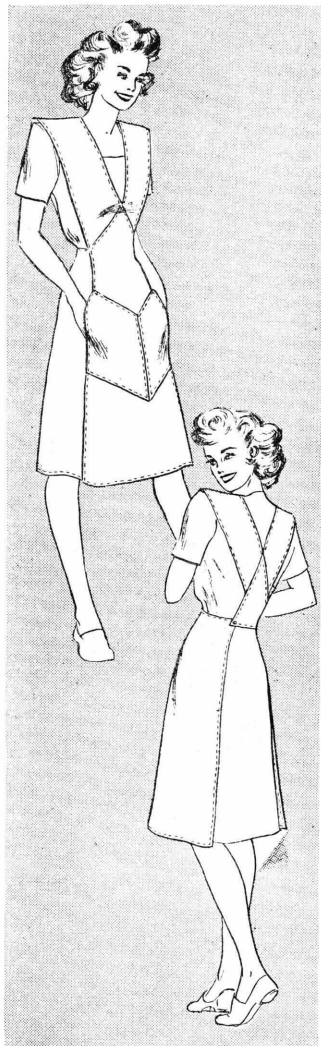
Man's Apron

An apron adjustable for any-size man—it's straight and without trim, and it protects the clothes. Two long darts—one on each side—give the apron the shape that's needed. Shoulder straps are fitted and sewed to a crosswise bar at center back to prevent sliding. One piece of cloth makes all three pockets—two large ones with slanted openings, as well as a small one.

Jumper Apron

This jumper apron has wide shoulder straps fitted to prevent slipping and a three-gore skirt that is trim at waist and hips, yet gives plenty of cover-all protection. The skirt buttons easily to a three-cornered piece in the back.

Side openings on the pockets keep them from gapping and catching on door handles or cupboard knobs.



Bias apron



Square-bib apron



Pinafore



Square-Bib Apron

This apron is a real coverall, and a three-way time-saver—a "quickie" to make, to put on, and to iron. Cut crosswise of the goods, it has the bib and skirt in one piece. Shoulder straps can be pulled far apart so you needn't rumple your hair when you slip the apron on. The V-shaped waist piece and the skirt fasten over one easy-to-reach button in the back.

Bias Apron

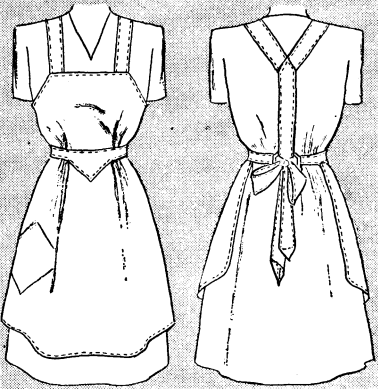
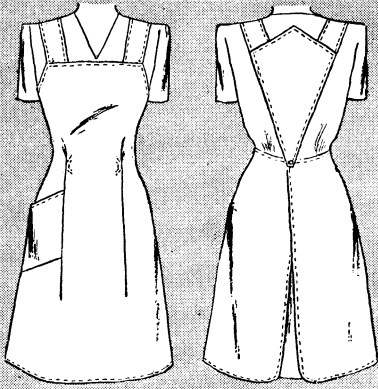
Made of a dainty print or smart plaid, this bias apron is just the thing for church or canteen suppers.

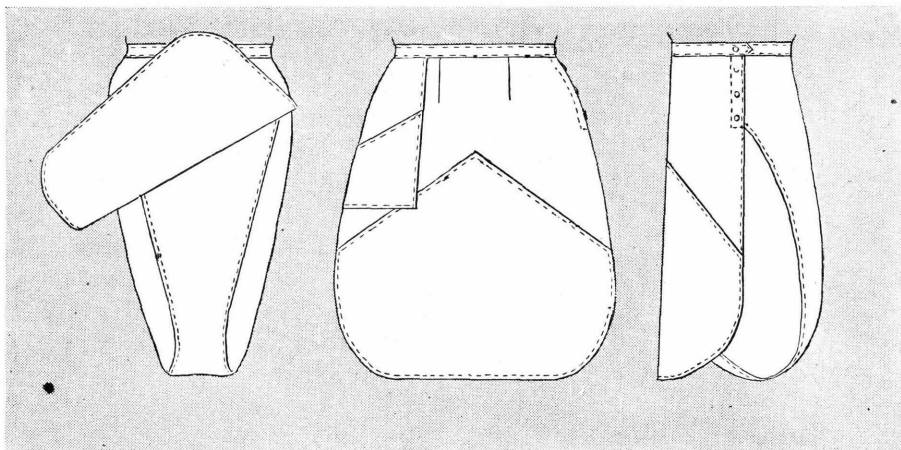
One square yard of goods makes the apron body, and an extra half yard goes for pocket, straps, and band.

Gathers to nip in the waist and a band with ties, applied over the gathers, give shape. A single band holds shoulder straps together in the back so they can't slide. The sash runs through two loops and ties at center back.

Pinafore

Streamlined for the woman who hasn't time to iron ruffles, this pinafore is pretty as well as practical. It opens down the back with only two fastenings—a button at the neck and a tie at the waist. This does away with the usual row of buttons that scratch furniture and are awkward to fasten. Ample pockets in the gathered parts of the skirt are particularly easy to use.





Mop Apron

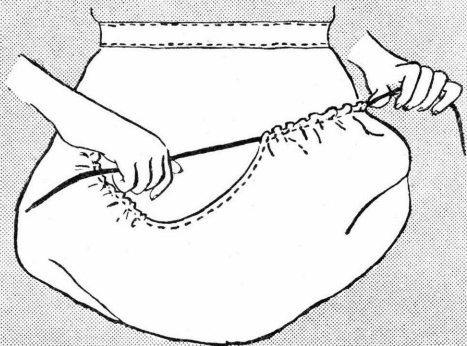
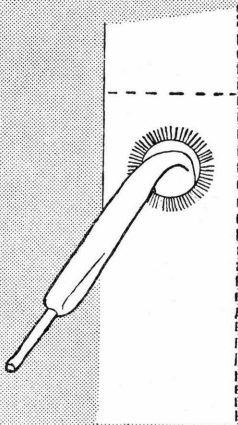
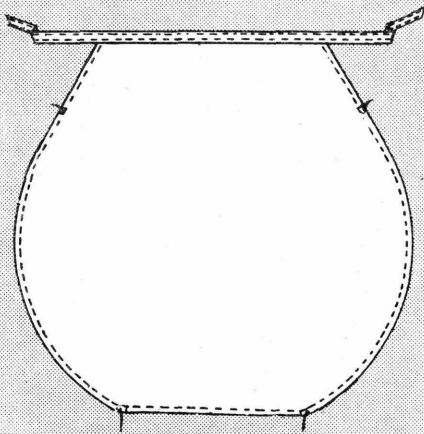
Here's a one-job apron. It's a step-into apron for cleaning days. It holds your skirt up—out of mop water, and keeps you from catching your skirt on your heels. The pocket hangs free from the belt—a convenience when you stoop at work.

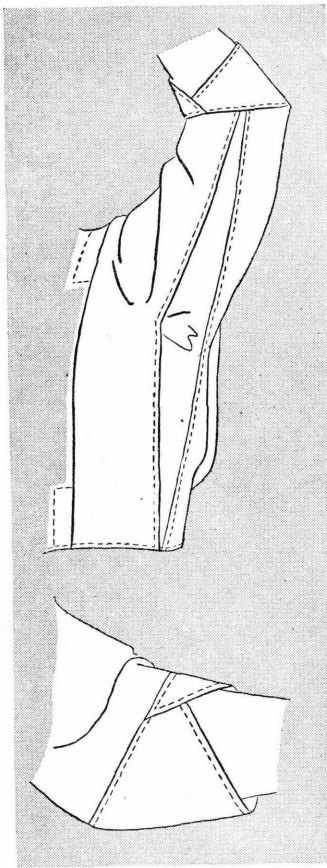
No need to buy new material to make this apron. If you have a man's discarded shirt, use it; you can make the apron with a little piecing.



Basket Apron

Designed for double duty, this may be a serviceable round-the-house apron or—pull the drawstrings and you have a basket for carrying in roasting ears, freshly laid eggs, or a mess of peas. Make it of sturdy cotton and use strong drawstrings that slip easily through the edge casings. Shoestrings are excellent for this purpose.





Kitchen Jacket

Safety features high-light this washable jacket to be worn over a cotton dress on chilly mornings.

Three-quarter-length sleeves with ample elbowroom are tapered to fit the lower arm by surplice, self-adjusting cuffs, so that they are out of the way of fire and protruding pan handles. For further safety in work around a stove, the jacket is best made of material with no nap on the outside. If more warmth is needed than a smooth material affords, a soft lining of dark outing flannel may be quilted to the inside of the jacket.

Back and sleeves are roomy for action. Because of an inset at underarm, the jacket doesn't pull up when you reach to a high shelf.

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